

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-07 DHA-02 ACDA-07 AGRE-00 AID-05

CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FEAE-00

FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01

PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /131 W

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R 210914Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3598

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 OSLO 1885

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIS, PFOR, UR, NO

SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN/SOVIET FISHING IN BARENTS SEA BOUNDARY AREA

REF: (A) OSLO 1647, (B) OSLO 432 (C) OSLO 1788 (D) OSLO 105

BEGIN SUMMARY LOS MINISTER EVENSEN IS CLEARLY WORRIED THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT CONTACTED HIM ABOUT RENEWING IN APRIL AS PROMISED THEIR TALKS WITH NORWAY ON FISHING IN THE BARENTS SEA BOUNDARY AREA. HE SAYS THAT FAILURE TO DO SO WILL BE AN INDICATION OF A WORSENING OF NORWEGIAN/SOVIET RELATIONS. HE HOPES TO OVERCOME SOVIET DIFFICULTIES WITH DESCRIBING THE DISPUTED AREA IN A FISHING AGREEMENT BY MAKING THE AGREEMENT APPLICABLE ONLY TO FISHING BANKS IN THE DISPUTED AREA. END SUMMARY.

1. NORWAY'S LOS MINISTER, JENS EVENSEN, DE-BRIEFED EMBOFFS ON APRIL 15 ON HIS FISHERY TALKS WITH SOVIETS IN MOSCOW IN EARLY CONFIDENTIAL

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APRIL (OSLO 1647). HE ATTRIBUTED FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON FISHING IN DISPUTED BOUNDARY AREA OUT TO 200-MILE LIMIT, TO STRAINS IN NORWEGIAN/SOVIET RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY NORWAY'S EXPULSION IN JANUARY OF SIX SOVIET SPIES, TO COOLING OF RELATIONS IN GENERAL BETWEEN EAST AND WEST AND TO CHECKS PUT ON SOVIET FISHERIES MINISTER ISHKOV BY HAWKS IN OTHER SOVIET MINISTRIES, NOTABLY DEFENSE MINISTRY.

2. EVENSEN SAID CHANGE IN SOVIET ATTITUDE WAS IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS IN NEGOTIATIONS. ALTHOUGH EVENSEN CLAIMED HE AND ISHKOV HAD REACHED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE (APPARENTLY WITH KOSYGIN'S BLESSING) TO A "GRAY AREA" SOLUTION FOR DISPUTED BARENTS SEA BOUNDARY AREA IN DECEMBER (OSLO 432), ISHKOV OPENED THE MOST RECENT ROUND OF TALKS IN EARLY APRIL BY SAYING THAT ANY SUCH AGREEMENT WAS NOW OUT OF QUESTION AS IT WOULD PREJUDICE THE SOVIET SECTOR LINE BOUNDARY CLAIM. AFTER PROTRACTED PRIVATE NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISHKOV DURING WHICH DELEGATIONS WORKED OUT ALL OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR "JOINT ADMINISTRATION" OF A GRAY ZONE, EXCEPT THE SIZE, SHAPE, AND LOCATION OF THE ZONE ITSELF, EVENSEN SAID ISHKOV SUGGESTED DEFINING THE ZONE BY DRAWING A LINE TO THE WEST OF THE SECTOR LINE TO ADD ROUGHLY 60,000 SQUARE KILOMETERS TO THE ZONE. THIS WOULD DOUBLE THE ZONE AND PUT THE SECTOR LINE IN MIDDLE OF THE AREA. THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO NORWAY, EVENSEN SAID, SINCE ISHKOV REJECTED ANY SIMILAR EXTENSION TO ADD 60,000 SQUARE KILOMETERS TO THE EAST OF DISPUTED AREA OF USSR.

3. ACCORDING TO EVENSEN TALKS ENDED WITH ISHKOV SAYING THAT HE WOULD COME TO OSLO IN APRIL TO RESUME THEM, PROVIDED, ISHKOV ADDED, NORWEGIAN ANTI-SOVIET PRESS CAMPAIGN DID NOT CONTINUE. IF IT DOD, ISHKOV SAID, HE DOUBTED HIS SUPERIORS WOULD ALLOW HIM TO COME TO OSLO. EVENSEN SAID HE EXPLAINED THAT NORWAY HAD FREE PRESS BUT THAT ISHKOV APPARENTLY FOUND THIS HARD TO UNDERSTAND. ISHKOV SAID VISIT TO OSLO WOULD COME AT THE END OF AN UPCOMING TRIP TO ICELAND, LONDON, BRUSSELS, AND COPENHAGEN. EVENSEN TOLD EMBOFFS THAT NORWEGIAN TELEVISION INTERVIEW

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APRIL 14 OF SAKHAROV IN WHICH SAKHAROV HAD CRITICIZED USSR HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER POLICIES IN RESPONSE TO NORWEGIAN QUESTIONS HAD PROBABLY BEEN UNHELPFUL IN REGARD TO ISHKOV'S STATED CONCERN ABOUT NORWEGIAN PRESS CAMPAIGN. (OSLO 1788)

4. EVENSEN TOLD EMBOFFS HE WAS CONCERNED THAT HE HAD HEARD NOTHING ABOUT ISKHOV'S TRIP OR HIS VISIT TO OSLO. IF ISHKOV DID NOT COME IT WOULD INDICATE A WORSENING IN NORWEGIAN/ SOVIET RELATIONS, HE SAID. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO GO TO MOSCOW AGAIN. HE HAS BEEN THERE SEVERAL TIMES SINCE ISHKOV LAST CAME TO OSLO, AND THE NORWEGIAN PRESS HAS CRITICIZED THE LACK OF RECIPROCITY. HE HAD THOUGHT OF SUGGESTING GENEVA, HE SAID, BUT THAT MIGHT MAKE IT APPEAR THAT RELATIONS WERE WORSE THAN THEY ARE. DCM NOTED ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, ISHKOV HAD BEEN TIED UP WITH DIFFICULT DISCUSSIONS WITH JAPANESE DURING PAST WEEK AND THIS MIGHT EXPLAIN ISHKOV'S DELAY IN CONTACTING EVENSEN ABOUT RESUMING TALKS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 OSLO 1885

5. EVENSEN THEN REVEALED THAT HE HOPED TO GET HIS GOVERNMENT'S
PERMISSION IN NEXT ROUND OF TALKS WITH SOVIETS
TO PROPOSE TO THE SOVIETS THAT THE
AGREED JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM BE APPLIED ONLY TO
FISHING BANKS IN DISPUTED AREA INSTEAD OF TRYING TO AGREE ON
DEFINITION OF DISPUTED AREA. THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE TO DRAW
THREE ROUGHLY PARALLELRECTANGULAR BOXES, EACH COVERING A
MAJOR FISHING BANK INSIDE THE DISPUTED AREA. THESE WOULD
BE SO DRAWN AS TO TAKE IN VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE DISPUTED AREA
WITHIN THE 200-MILE LIMIT. ALL THREE BOXES WOULD BE EXTENDED
SLIGHTLY TO THE WEST OF THE SECTOR LINE, WITH THE SOUTHERNMOST
BOX EXTENDING SLIGHTLY EAST OF MEDIAN LINE, AND THE NORTHERNMOST
ONE BEYOND THE 200-MILE LIMIT. EVENSEN SAID EXPERTS IN THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY WERE DOUBTFUL THE SOVIETS WOULD ACCEPT THE
EXTENSION OF THE SOUTHERNMOST BOX TO THE EAST OF MEDIAN LINE
AS THE AREA COVERED WAS CLOSE TO THE SENSITIVE SOVIET MILITARY
ZONE. HE ADMITTED NORTHERNMOST AREA EXTENDED BEYOND NORWAY'S 200-
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MILE JURISDICTION, BUT INDICATED "JOINT ADMINISTRATION" WOULD

APPLY THERE.

6. EVENSEN SAID FISHING IN DISPUTED AREA STARTS TO PICK UP IN MAY, AND IT WAS IMPORTANT TO REACH AN EARLY AGREEMENT. SOVIETS, HE ADDED, HAD TOLD HIM THEY INTENDED TO ESTABLISH 200-MILE FISHING LIMIT IN BARENTS SEA IN MID APRIL. NORWAY WOULD TRY TO WAIT TO ESTABLISH A FISHERIES PRESERVATION ZONE (FPZ) AROUND SVALBARD UNTIL AFTER DISPUTED AREA AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WITH SOVIETS. HE FELT THAT GIVEN SOVIET OBJECTIONS TO FPZ (OSLO 105) AND RECENT COOLING IN BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE GON MIGHT HAVE TO DELAY ITS ESTABLISHMENT EVEN THOUGH SVALBARD FISHERIES BEGIN NEXT MONTH.

7. COMMENT: EVENSEN WAS CLEARLY WORRIED ABOUT NOT HEARING FROM THE SOVIETS ABOUT RESUMING THE FISHING TALKS. HIS CONCERN PROBABLY STEMS AS MUCH FROM WORRY ABOUT HIS OWN FUTURE AS IT DOES FROM WORRY THAT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE IS AN INDICATION OF A WORSENING IN NORWEGIAN/SOVIET RELATIONS. HE HAS BEEN NORWAY'S MAN IN MOTION FOR TWO YEAR, EXUDING CONFIDENCE. SO FAR, EVENSON HAS LITTLE TO SHOW FOR HIS EFFORTS AND IS COMING UNDER INCREASING DOMESTIC CRITICISM. HE IS INCLINED, AS HE DID AFTER HIS RECENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISHKOV IN MOSCOW, TO BLAME THE PROBLEMS IN THE FISHERY TALKS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS RATHER THAN ON THE SUBSTANCE AT ISSUE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE WAS REPRIMANDED BY HIS GOVERNMENT BECAUSE OF UNFORTUNATE, UNSUBSTANTED REMARKS HE MADE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SPY CASE, HIS POLITICAL FORTUNES ARE AT A LOW EBB, AND HE BADLY NEEDS A SUCCESS. YET WITH GENERAL ELECTIONS COMING UP IN SEPTEMBER, FISHING BY OTHERS IN NORWAY'S 200-MILE ZONE GOES ON AS USUAL. ANDERS

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